

*Abstract*

A method and kit for accessing the pericardial space take advantage of the fact that the right auricle is a thin-walled, low-pressure structure which can be readily penetrated without damaging the pericardium or the epicardium. The method includes the step of passing a guide catheter through a selected peripheral vein to establish a transvenous route to the right auricle of the heart. An infusion guide wire and a leading guide wire are passed through the guide catheter and into the right auricle so that a distal end of the leading guide wire is positioned against a wall of the right auricle. The leading guide wire is located within a lumen of the infusion guide wire and protrudes outward, preferably about 2mm, from a distal end of the infusion guide wire. The wall of the right auricle is then pierced with the distal end of the leading guide wire. After the wall of the right auricle is pierced, at least one of the infusion guide wire and the leading guide wire are advanced into the pericardial space. Once in position, the infusion guide wire and/or the leading guide wire can be used as a conduit over which a desired catheter may be introduced for performing a specific medical procedure. Alternatively, the infusion guide wire and/or the leading guide wire can be used to perform a specific medical procedure without the introduction of an additional device into the pericardial space.

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